

POULTRY DEPARTMENT.

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Clippings vs. Original Matters.

We print an article, taken from the Southern Planter, in which the editor makes a great ado about not using clippings. Some well edited papers claim not to use anything except original matter. While others are not above using a good thing when they see it even though it did not originate in their own columns. We believe that it depends more on the writer than anything else. If you print trash, it does not make it any better to say that it was written especially for your columns.

On the other hand, if you find a really valuable article in an exchange, it is none the less useful because it was not intended for your paper when written.

We should be glad to fill this page, each week, with original matter, but that is impossible.

We are very careful about our clippings and if we use anything about which we are doubtful, we make a note of the fact. One of the best of our poultry exchanges contains each week a number of clippings.

The editor seems to go on the idea that no one paper can get all the good writers on his staff and that it is wiser to use the best even if not intended for him in the first place.

We should be very glad to hear from more of our readers about their experience in keeping poultry in Florida.

Capons vs. "Old Roosters."

If you are raising many young chickens, and especially if you have any difficulty in getting a fair price for your broilers, we advise you to try caponizing some of the cockerels. We are not at all sure that there is good market for them in this state, but it would be well to try a few for your own use. The difference in value, where there is a market for capons, is clearly shown in an article which we cut from the New England Farmer:

On my way to attend a Farmer's institute in New York state last month I had to wait 15 or 20 minutes at Rochester for a branch-line train. While strolling about the station I came upon a baggage truck on which were piled three coops of cockerels, evidently on their way to market. A glance told that the (perhaps) 25 birds were past the soft-roaster age, and would be sold as "old roosters"; they were all showing some development of spurs, and there was other evidence of a hardening of the flesh which makes roosters such poor eating. Roosters are quoted in the market reports as selling at eight to nine cents a pound, and these would weigh about seven to eight pounds apiece. In that local market they might sell for a fraction more than if shipped to a larger market, but calling them worth 12 cents a pound would only bring their value up 84 to 96 cents apiece, and the growers had fed them food fully to that value in the eight or nine months of their lives. We cannot see any profit there!

If they had been fattened and sold when weighing about five pounds each they would doubtless have brought 18 to 20 cents a pound, actually bringing the grower as much money as they will sell for now, and saved the food of three or four months. If they had been caponized when weighing two and a half to three pounds apiece, and grown to the age they were when sold to market, they would probably have weighed

an average of a pound apiece more—and sold for 20 cents a pound, paying the grower about \$1 apiece profit.

Visiting a friend near Bordentown, N. J., four or five days later he told me his experience with his Barred Rock cockerels this season; he had 131 cockerels caponized, of which number he lost one, and the 130 remaining were sold the week before Thanksgiving, for 22 1-2 cents a pound, wholesale. They averaged to weigh eight and a quarter pounds apiece, and sold for just about \$1.80 apiece. My friend said those capons paid him between 92 and 94 cents profit each. The largest capon weighed 10 pounds and 10 ounces, and the average of the 130 was 8 1-4 pounds apiece.

This lot of cockerels was hatched mostly in April, a dozen or so of them were hatched the last of March and a few the first of May; as they were marketed between the 20th and 25th of November they were but seven to seven and a half months old when marketed, and paid the grower 92 to 94 cents profit each. They were grown entirely by the dry-feeding method; the food being one-quarter whole oats, three-eighths corn and wheat, and beef scraps before them all the time. They were given about an acre of field to roam over till about a month before marketing, then were penned up in a modest yard. My friend said these cockerels (caponized) were just no trouble at all—he kept the food-hoppers supplied with the foods and they did the rest. He told us that those Barred Rock cockerels weighed two pounds apiece when eight weeks old, grown on all dry feed, and that they were big, broad-backed, "husky" fellows, and felt solid when lifted.

On our way to the station at Bordentown we turned in at the driveway of the man who buys up the fine dressed poultry of that section and ships it to New York and Boston. He was just buying a lot of about 60 splendid, great capons, which averaged to weigh nine pounds apiece, and he paid 20 cents a pound for them. They were a good lot, well fattened, and the farmer told us they paid him about \$1 apiece profit—from 90 cents to \$1 apiece. Quite a difference between these and the overgrown "old roosters" that had "eaten their heads off!"

Mites and Hawks—Two Chicken Enemies.

Home and Farm published the remedies given below. The mite cure may be good, that is if you know what carbon oil is. We do not see how the tin would scare hawks on a cloudy day.

In his lectures before the students of the Agricultural Department of the University of Missouri last week, T. E. Orr, Secretary of the American Poultry Association, told methods of combating mites and chicken hawks that might easily be used by every Missouri housewife.

Mites, he says, may be gotten rid of by spraying the chicken house with a mixture of one part crude carbolic acid and eight parts carbon oil. This mixture he recommends in preference to mite exterminators sold by traveling agents.

Hawks, he claims, may be kept out of the poultry yard by attaching bright pieces of tin, 6x10 inches, to the trees and poles surrounding quarters, by strings two feet long, so that the wind will make the bright metal dance in the sunlight.

Sore Head.

A lady, writing to the Southern Ruralist, gives her method of curing sorehead. We have not tried it, and give it for what it is worth. We should recommend caution in its use, if you have a bad case and know of nothing better, it can be tried on the principle that "Desperate diseases need desperate remedies."

Here is a sure cure for sore head among fowls:

Get a can of some good disinfectant, make a solution according to directions and dip the fowl, body and all. Do not keep them in it too long. It will kill lice, fleas and mites at the same time. In two or three days the warts or sores will disappear and not return. It is undoubtedly a microbe that causes the disease. I think I made the solution a little stronger than directed, for I had tried so many remedies that I had become rather reckless and thought if a little bit was good, a great deal would be better. I had about 250 young chickens affected at one time, also little turkeys and guineas.

Nux Vomica for Killing Hawks.

It is stated as a fact by those who have experimented that nux vomica will certainly kill hawks if given to the chickens. The following directions for its use were published in the Southern Planter:

How much nux vomica should be used on broilers to kill hawks and not hurt the chicken?

Nottoway Co., Va. John Gireth. Mix half a teaspoon of powdered nux vomica in a quart of dry meal and then make into a mash and feed to the chickens. The amount may be increased up to a teaspoon to a quart of the meal, or 5 or 6 drops of the liquid nux vomica for each chicken may be mixed with the mash. Ducks and guineas will be killed by this mash, but chickens are immune against it. The hawks taking the chicken will be poisoned.—Ed. So. Planter.

Three Tons of Poultry Manure going Begging.

A firm of poultrymen, in south Florida, wrote to the Southern Ruralist, that they have a large quantity of poultry manure for which they can find no sale. It must be that they ask an exorbitant price or else the gardeners in that part of the state are not up-to-date or they would be taking this chance, that is provided, as we said before, that it is offered at a fair price. But no poultryman who has any land to cultivate can afford to sell the droppings from his poultry house at the market price of fertilizer.

We have a poultry farm and keep about 3000 fowls, and accumulate a large quantity of droppings, and seem to be unable to find market for it. Our fowls are yarded and the houses all have dropping boards. The droppings are removed from boards and put in air tight cans, thus being kept in good shape for use. We have 3 tons on hand now. Most of our citizens use acetylene gas and we use the cans that the carbide comes in for this purpose.

Answer.—The value of poultry manure as a commercial article would depend very much upon the amount of moisture it contained and the mechanical condition it was in. If you will refer to page 22 of our January issue, extra copy of which goes forward to you under separate cover, you will note the value of hen manure as compared to that of stable manure and other manure. From these figures you will note that ordinary poultry manure would contain about 1.50 per cent. of nitrogen, 1.50 per cent. phosphoric acid and .80 per cent. of potash. This, figuring the nitrogen at 16 cents a pound and phosphoric acid at 5 cents per pound, would make hen manure worth about \$9.40 per ton. If the manure was thoroughly dry and screened it would analyze considerably higher as the moisture it contained necessarily reduces the percentage of the plant food. After this sample of the manure could be analyzed and it could then be sold on the commercial value shown from your analysis.

We should think it would pay you to use all this fertilizer yourselves in growing food crops for your fowls. It would not pay to ship such low grade

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fertilizer any very great distance except in carload lots in bulk, and we doubt if this would be feasible. We should think it would be an easy matter for you to get in communication with some large truck growers in your state and dispose of the fertilizer to them.

Poultry Notes.

A correspondent, of the Southern Planter, talks very plainly about the exaggerated stories told of the great profits in the poultry business.

From the correspondence that I received relative to incubators and brooders, it would seem that every one in the universe and their cousins, uncles, and aunts read The Southern Planter. It is gratifying to note the interest manifested in the poultry department. March is the month when every one who intends to hatch chicks that will do them good at the right time must get busy, very busy. Chicks hatched during this month will begin to lay in September, if fed right. Do not over-feed, but keep them growing. We expect two large broods before these notes will reach the readers of The Planter, and we will not allow our incubators to get cool before July 1st. We want to hatch and raise at least 2,500 chicks. If one would read the various incubator catalogues and brooder testimonials, this would seem to be a very easy matter. It would simply amount to a matter of getting 2,500 fertile eggs, put them into their particular machines, at the expiration of 21 days take out 2,500 chicks, put them into their "raisemall" brooders, and you've got um. Alas, Bruno, 'tis not so. There are blood rings, dead chicks in the shell, cripples, chilled chicks, roasted chicks, "bowel trouble," pip, colds, over-fed chicks, smothered chicks, lice, mites, rats, cats, owls, hawks, jackdaws, minks, dogs, black grip, white "enchancers," etc., etc., between this and the final round-up. If we get our 2,500 chicks out of 5,000 eggs we will say, "well done." Our eggs were never better. We hope to hatch a good per cent. and will try to raise "every one." That sounds encouraging. I cannot understand why people cannot be honest in the hen business as well as in any other occupation. No man can sell eggs that are all good. No man can make an incubator that will hatch every fertile egg, and no brooder will raise every chick. Every one knows this to be true. Why do people write and print such stuff? There is too much misrepresentation in all poultry matters. The profits are figured "too big."

I believe that poultry, properly managed, is the most profitable stock that can be kept on the farm. A friend of mine, writing from a Northern city in December last, said eggs were "precious as pearls." I think, much more so. I would rather have two nice fresh eggs in my waffles for breakfast than a quart of pearls. Let us be honest and give the hen credit for what they do and give them a chance to do their best. They are better than a gold mine, because there is no chance about the hen business, but do not believe the "big" stories told about the wonderful profits in poultry. Even the old, reliable Planter gets caught napping occasionally and prints one of these "whoppers." In the February issue it prints a clipping from Country Gentleman, page 122: "A big poultry farm." This man ships 140,000 dozen eggs a year. He keeps his hens on the colony plan, 40 in a house. He has 100 of these houses. This means 4,000 hens. They must lay 35 dozen eggs each to make 140,000 dozen in a year. It takes twelve eggs to make a dozen in Virginia, and that means that every one of those hens laid 420 eggs in 365